last decade, while it acquired only 54 fighters (16 MIG-29/38 Sukhoi-300) during this period;

(b) if so, reasons for rapidly shrinking size of IAF; and

(c) Fresh steps taken by Government to fulfil the urgent demand of 130 Mirage-2000V of IAF in order to retain its fighting capabilities?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Necessary steps are constanly taken to ensure and upgrade the fighting capabilities of Indian Air Force.

MIG aircrafts crash in 2003

†779. SHRI D.P. YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of MIG aircrafts which crashed during the year 2002-03;

(b) whether technical faults are the cause of crashing of these aircrafts and whether any scheme is being formulated for modernisation of the aircrafts; if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether the Committee on Defence had recommended for withdrawal of these aircrafts from the fleet of Air Force; if so, what action has been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) 15 (fifteen).

(b) Technical Defect (TD), Human Error (HE) and various other factors cause accidents.

Modernisation and upgradation of Indian Air Force fleet is a continuous process.

(c) No, Sir.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.